

Bedford Youth and Family Services Committee Meeting
MINUTES
Thursday, September 11, 2014

Attendance: Sue Baldauf, Director; Alison Malkin, At Large and Acting Chair; Jessica Wildfong, Prevention Coordinator; Robert Bongiorno, Police Chief; Jeff Wardwell, Police; Caroline Fedele, Selectmen and Recreation Commission; Caroline Donnelly, Board of Health

Guest: Lisa Puffer, Counseling student

Absent: Tom Pinney, Chair; Ann Guay, School Committee; Peter Ricci, At Large

Meeting opened at 7pm with Acting Chair Alison Malkin presiding and introductions.

Minutes: Approval of the May minutes will require vote by email, due to too few eligible attendees from the May meeting. Sue will send out that email.

New Business:

YRBS Presentation: Jessica handed out a detailed summary of the Youth Behavior Risk Survey results. It was administered to Middle School and High School students in April 2014 and Bedford has been using this survey every 2 years since 1999. The main highlights include largely positive data, with declines in alcohol, marijuana, cigarette, and cigar use. There is data indicating increased connections with trusted adults in school buildings and decreased levels of fighting and sexual activity. Work needs to continue to be done on bullying issues, stress, and mental health. There are indications of increases in rates of self-harm, depression, and suicidal thoughts.

Jessica will meet with School personnel in October to review the data, and all the results will be released publicly in November. Sue and Jessica will work with SSRE, the company that analyzes the data, to create informative graphics and posters to demonstrate to students what is going well and what needs more work. There will be a written release of data, not a general meeting as they have not been well attended in the past few years. Congratulations were extended as this is hopeful and positive news.

November meeting: There will not be a November meeting, as Sue will be away. We decided to simply meet together next for our regularly scheduled meeting in January.

Programming: 200 JGMS parents came last night to hear a presentation on Resiliency before Back To School Night by Dr. Robert Evans. Coupling an information talk with the Back To School Night is an effective way to reach parents.

Safe Homes- Jessica is working on the data base for those who are signing up. Parents can sign up on line or send in the green form.

The Middle School is talking about a forum on Underage Drinking in the future.

Old Business:

Grants update: The Healthy Dining grant ends this month, has been very successful, and it will be featured during Bedford Day. There is also some corporate interest.

Healthy Bedford Grant –They are responding to the community survey that identified traffic/transportation and pedestrian connectivity as issues negatively impacting resident health and are working toward shepherding ideas and tasks to others after the grant ends in

January. A summary will be presented to the Selectmen later this month, and there will be a community meeting on the Pedestrian/Bike Master Plan November 12th at 7pm in the Town Hall. This is a big process and hopefully the community will come out and offer their opinions.

Hoarding Grant - It is going slowly as the case workers are shadowing the trainer on individual hoarding cases. BYFS and the Board of Health are working only with Eliot services at this point as Minuteman Senior Services is no longer participating in the grant.

Bedford was invited to submit a grant application to Lahey Hospital for Mental Health First Aid training. Board of Health will likely take the lead on that

Veterans update: There was a VA mental health forum in Beverly, MA in August, and Sue, Ryan, and Bill attended. Bill went to a suicide awareness program at the VA.

Transitional Families Update: Currently we are stable at 26/27 families in the Bedford Plaza Hotel. There are about 2,000 families statewide placed in hotels. The summer was successful with a variety of programming for the children, and the Rec. department was helpful with scholarships to camp and SBP.

Other: Recreation Department is seeing an uptick in attendance for Kids' Club. As a result, The Corner has become one room smaller. Youth space is, once again, an issue. There needs to be some contingency planning for the future, and Sue and Amy are planning a meeting with Facilities to begin discussion.

Updates from Committee Participants:

Caroline D.: The Health Department conducted tobacco compliance checks in Town and 4 places: Genetti's, Gammy's, Shell station, and Great Road Gulf station were cited for violations of selling to an underage minor and not requesting ID. There were hearings at the Board of Health and they were sanctioned and could not sell cigarettes for 24 hours. The Town offers voluntary trainings, and 2 of the stores joined the training. All 4 fired the employees who sold the cigarettes to the underage minor.

Health has hired a consultant to assess the School Nurse program and make sure they are utilized as effectively as possible as resources. Questions of should the nurses treat school staff and how to best communicate with the School system will hopefully be answered.

Tick testing program was successful, and 50% of ticks brought in tested positive for Lyme.

A possible drowning at the Doubletree Hotel was ruled an accident as the woman had a heart condition. The Board approved variances for both the Doubletree and Carleton Williard because of the distances between their pools and hot tubs.

Fay Williams is the new Health Agent.

Chief B: It was the busiest summer for the Police with the number of calls and the severity of calls. They were not as proactive as they'd like to be with the PACE, or Proactive Community Enforcement Team and plan to continue to station themselves in unmarked cars near the hot spots in Town.

They have been performing alcohol compliance checks, and 2 restaurants served underage youth.

Jeff W: A threat was called into the Newburyport school system, and a lockdown commenced. A student was arrested in possession of a knife though this was unrelated to the threat. An email was later sent from Israel explaining that there was no threat and no harm was intended though it was to demonstrate how vulnerable schools are.

The Washington DC trip for JGMS 8th grade went really well.

The Prom did not go well. 1 van driver with 32 students told Police there was alcohol in containers in the van. 16 students either admitted to drinking or failed the breathalyzer. 1 was arrested for disorderly conduct, and 1 was taken into protective custody. Principal Turner did a parent survey about steps to take to prevent this in the future.

Sheriffs' Camp went well, as did football camp. Jeff and Steve went up to football camp. It seems to be a good return to school.

The ALICE program enhanced safety plan will be implemented in the school district. Jon Sills sent out an email detailing this plan.

Jeff will go on the PA during High School Homeroom tomorrow to tell students about legal interventions regarding alcohol and other drug use for underage minors.

The Police and High School students' basketball league will continue again this year.

Best Buddies in Bedford HS was named #1 in the Country.

Middlesex Community College has funded a full time School Resource Officer, and Craig Naylor has been appointed.

There is a new law regarding SROs and portable radios in each school. Funding for this has not yet been determined.

Caroline F.: The Rec Department will be looking at making changing Springs Brook into a year round facility just for Bedford residents. There are endless possibilities including a dog park, walking trails, cross country ski trails, and they are entering into the design phase of that process. She will send out information about the Selectmen goals for this year.

Ann Guay: Ann was not in attendance but sent the following school update to Sue:

- Opening day went well
- 2 modular classrooms were brought to Davis and will be utilized by two first grade classrooms. Due to circumstances beyond the school department's control, they were not ready for use on opening day. Two classes have met for first two weeks in gym and library. Parents met with staff last week to discuss modulares and are now pleased with progress Happy to announce that they will open to students on Monday, September 15th.
- Homeless population is leveling out at 25 families with school-aged children. The state has promised not to backfill. Transportation is still an issue.
- Bedford Schools will enter into a contract with a company to conduct Enrollment Projection Study. As planned it will create a one look, a five year look and a 10year look. Once it is completed, a feasibility study will be conducted in FY16 to determine if additions are needed at the schools. There are currently 10-first grade classes and an addition may need to be built.

- A 1-year MOU has been set up with the Lincoln Schools for children of retired military to attend Bedford High School. No federal aid is received for retired military so Lincoln schools will pay for these students to attend Bedford High School.
- Bedford schools received a \$5,000 grant from the BEF to help fund the Facing History Program which was brought in as a response to the acts of anti-semitism last year in the schools. Our Facing History Consultant has worked closely with our 8th grade social studies teachers this summer, and other staff continue to meet to outline common work for the year.
- Bedford High School Principal Henry Turner made a presentation to School Committee on September 9th regarding plans to change the policy regarding use of a breath alcohol testing device. This is due in part to schools dances being disrupted by students who are intoxicated or under the influence. If approved, it will allow BHS administrators to expand the use of Breath alcohol testing on students prior to, during, or after any school event. This will include random selection of students seeking to participate in a voluntary event such as a dance. Should a student refuse to take the test, parents will be notified and required to take student home. Principal Turner hopes that expanded use will deter student alcohol use at these events.

Ali M. Newton mandates that students take buses to the prom, and it works well. They use nice coaches and have DVDs of the students through their high school years.

Meeting Adjourned at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Malkin
Acting Clerk

Next meeting: January 8, 2015 7:00 p.m. Chair: Tom Pinney Clerk: Ann Guay